



# EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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99-038

# Episcopalians join other churches in campaign for compassion in Kosovo

by James Solheim

(ENS) Episcopalians in the United States have joined Christians around the world in an outpouring of compassion for victims of the conflict in Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians are systematically being slaughtered or driven from their villages.

"Our church members are watching the images on their television screens and they are responding to this tragedy with heartfelt generosity," said Sandra Swan, director of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. "We sympathize with all victims of this tragedy and will do what we can to help in rebuilding their lives."

A brief report sent throughout the church said that the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief has been receiving contributions and channeling emergency assistance through Action by Churches Together. Parishes received bulletin inserts urging them to contribute generously to the Fund to support further assistance to the refugees—including support for their longer-term resettlement and rehabilitation (see text in *News Features*).

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the church's refugee resettlement and advocacy program, has been working with partner agencies to urge the U.S. government to increase humanitarian assistance to those countries which suddenly find themselves hosting thousands of refugees. The agencies also underscored the importance of returning the Kosovar refugees to their homes.

In the meantime, the church's Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C., monitors the response of Congress and the Administration, working with ecumenical partners to press for an early and peaceful solution to the crisis in the Balkans.

## Griswold deplores failure

In a March 26 statement, Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold said that "the acts of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo are deeply repugnant and stir up memories of ethnic hatreds that have marred the course of history." While the use of "overwhelming military power" by NATO forces "will be widely debated," Griswold said that he was "personally torn by this decision because its purpose is noble while the means are so violent. Christ calls us into relationship and the present course leads us to further alienation from one another," he said. "Yet for us to stand by and allow the genocide to continue is also intolerable."

Griswold deplored the failure to resolve the conflict through diplomacy represents "a profound failure of the human spirit and will. It also reveals the insidious way in which religious perspectives, grounded in God's all-embracing compassion and love for humankind, can be subverted and made to serve the idol of ethnic or national self-justification," he said. And he appealed to President Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia "to reconsider his options and pursue the path of peace through negotiation."

## Others add their voices

"Each day of bombing makes the solution more distant, and increases the risk of regionalization of the conflict," said the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and the Reformed Alliance in a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. They appealed for "an immediate moratorium on the NATO military intervention, in order to allow for a renewal of

the political process" under UN leadership because it alone could offer a "framework for new initiative which can break the present deadlock."

Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Pavle issued a strong appeal for peace, calling for an end to the bombardments so that "the just solution for the exit of the actual crisis may be found through negotiation."

In a letter to Pavle, Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia said that "the rude pragmatism of the NATO military politicians prevailed over the responsible good sense and patient and painstaking diplomatic work for the peaceful solution of the Kosovo problem." He emphasized that Kosovo is for Serbs "the sacred place of their forefathers and the land of old churches and monasteries which have intransient spiritual and cultural importance."

In his Easter sermon Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey blamed the "evil of ethnic cleansing" for what he called the "crucifixion of Kosovo." While military action was a sign that "the civilized world cannot stand idly by and accept that evil should triumph," he asserted that "skills and energy of similar intensity" should be used to save and protect the lives of "helpless and vulnerable people."

Archbishop Michael Peers, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, in his March 30 statement warned of "the dangers inherent in becoming entangled in a complex political situation with roots going back several centuries in a way that exacerbates the underlying tensions that are the cause of the conflict." Too often, he suggested, "we have failed to become adequately informed as to the underlying causes, or how those causes are shaped and amplified by centuries-old ethnic and religious divisions in the region..". He concluded that military action "even though motivated by high humanitarian ideals, fails to meet the tests provided in the Christian tradition... for a morally justifiable military engagement."

--James Solheim is director of the Office of News and Information for the Episcopal Church.

99-039

## Archbishop of Canterbury speaks at UN conference, visits Alabama and Sewanee

by Jim Goodson

(ENS) Peace among nations is impossible without peace among major religions, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey told about 1,000 people March 15 to conclude the Thanksgiving World Assembly.

"Religion is the missing dimension in statecraft today," Carey said. "We need a new dialogue between the secular and religious world."

The Thanksgiving World Assembly brought religious leaders from 33 nations to Dallas to kick off the United Nations' celebration of 2000: An International Year of Thanksgiving.

Speakers included Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria, considered a potential papal candidate, Dr. Muzammil Husain Siddiqi, president of the Islamic Society of North America, and Dr. K.L. Seshagiri Rao, professor emeritus in the department of religious studies at the University of Virginia and one of the world's leading Hindu scholars.

Carey was the keynote speaker at closing ceremonies, which included a celebration of harvest festivals from around the world and a call to religious leaders to foster a sense of commonality in the next millennium.

## **False security**

The archbishop said western secular thought, buttressed by the explosion of technology, offers a false security that's leading to social decay. "I question what kind of society is simply content with material wealth," Carey said. "And I question the hubris that often accompanies western thinking today."

Giving thanks on a continuous basis is the core value for virtually every major religion, Carey said. Technological advances are also a gift from God to his people, the archbishop said, listing ways a sense of gratitude helps us reach our full potential.

"A spirit of thanksgiving makes us tolerant of other people, faiths and beliefs and forces us to make room for others, especially minorities," Carey said. "Tolerance is written into the codes of all major religions. Giving thanks to God through regular prayer and worship allows us a more generous understanding of the world around us."

The archbishop described an incident when he was principal of Trinity College in Bristol, England.

"I had to discipline a fellow staff member whose behavior was far short of university standards," Carey said. "I got up that morning prepared to give him a very rough time. But as I walked up the hill I decided to think of him as an individual with very unique gifts--and as someone who means well, in spite of some severe faults."

"I was no longer angry and vengeful. Instead, we discussed the pertinent issues, shook hands and left the room friends. A crisis was averted. I was still somewhat stern, but it was a warmer, kinder kind of stern. And we solved a significant problem."

## **Resilience of religious thought**

Carey said he is always impressed by the resilience of true religious thought, which emphasizes an understanding of the faith of others.

"We've seen the death of Nazism and Communism, but we haven't seen the end of many conflicts based upon a poor understanding of religion that plays up ethnic and historical differences at the expense of thanksgiving," Carey said, citing the Middle East, Northern Ireland and Algeria as prime examples.

People should have the freedom of expression to change religious beliefs without fear of reprisal, the archbishop said. "A commitment to reciprocity should be at the core of our actions. We should share our religious experiences and support one another in our mutual quest for understanding."

A spirit of thanksgiving causes all religious people to condemn all atrocities, he said. "We must make room for common action and protest--and we have a responsibility to listen to and understand each other, particularly among the great missionary faiths of Christianity and Islam. Sharing Jesus Christ also means listening to the other's story."

He argued that "noting the impressive common ground we all share will help us build a more just and peaceful world."

The archbishop called upon world religious leaders to make a creative contribution to the world. "The story of the 21st century will revolve around the ability of major religions to show that God is a God of love," he said "Giving thanks is a wonderful place to start."

The four-day assembly was sponsored by The Thanks-Giving Foundation, a non-profit agency based in Dallas and begun in 1964 to promote the thanksgiving tradition in the United States. It now encompasses an international focus.

Sir John Templeton, founder of Templeton Funds and the Templeton Prize, is president of The Thanks-Giving Foundation. The Templeton Prize was first awarded in 1974 to an unknown nun named Mother Teresa.

### Doctorate from Sewanee

Before the conference in Dallas, Carey stopped at Sewanee's University of the South to accept an honorary doctor of divinity degree on March 12. Dean Guy Lytle of the School of Theology said that it was a reminder "that we are part of the worldwide Anglican Communion."

According to Lytle, Carey "powerfully urged young women and men to respond to God's call to the ordained ministry in these exciting times, and affirmed and challenged those already in seminary by telling the story of his own faith journey and ministry."

In addressing the role of universities in helping to change societies, Carey said that "new knowledge is often greeted by fear because it threatens established thinking. It asks questions and unsettles dull conformity. It introduces new assumptions and questions old ones. Universities should be an irritant to society, hotbeds of radical thinking, the grit in the oyster that may become a pearl. Universities remind us that our understanding and experience of our world are always provisional," Carey said.

Universities and churches are bound together in valuing transformation and an obligation to tradition, Carey added. "A university helps a society transcend itself in analyzing the past afresh and building on it." But he argued that "no university, any more than a church, is a slave to tradition but is always reflecting critically on the journey taken."

### Careys in Alabama

The Careys also visited the Diocese of Alabama and the Cathedral Church of the Advent March 13-14, addressing the clergy of the diocese and the chapter of the cathedral and their spouses at a dinner given in his honor, and preached to overflow crowds.

Carey spoke with what was described as "clarity and compassion as one acquainted with and touched by the needs and sufferings of many Christians throughout the world, and with theological candor and courage as he outlined mission imperatives for the Church in the twenty-first century."

He listed:

- Renewal of faith. "We must define a church not by what it looks like but by what it stands for, its message, its faith."
- A more accessible faith. "Beware of erecting hurdles that some will find too high to clear... baptism, for example.... I was grateful to God that when I was a baby my parents who did not go to church were not rejected by their minister.... The Anglican Church took me in [at baptism] before I took it in."
- Renewal of structures. "I've noticed a curious thing in my ministry: We apply two standards to Church life.... To individuals we say, 'live by faith, trust in God, be adaptable, learn the importance of sacrifice.' We don't say that to our structures.... Structures too must be missionary minded."

Carey challenged his listeners to "risk being generous" in sharing the gospel with others and to openly welcome strangers into the church. "Don't put boundaries... around our Church," he said, "because so many people yearn for God but don't know his name." And he encouraged his hosts to "trust God and go for it," to "create community" and to "increasingly aim at becoming a seven-day-a-week church ministry to help people where they are. Mission without evangelism is social work and evangelism without mission is worthless."

--This article is based on reports from Jim Goodson in the Diocese of Dallas; Sarah Moore at the University of the South in Sewanee; and the Rev. Canon Thomas Hotchkiss at the cathedral in Birmingham, Alabama.

99-040

## Church leaders join campaign for relief of international debt

by James Solheim

(ENS) Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane of Cape Town has joined other church leaders in the international campaign seeking to cancel the debts of nations in the developing world.

In South Africa, Jubilee 2000, a broad-based campaign pressing for the alleviation of debts, has released a report on the role played by Swiss, German, British and American banks in supporting the apartheid regime through "odious" loans. About 90 percent of the nation's long-term debts are owed to the four creditor countries.

Ndungane called on Swiss and German banks to make reparation because they were "accomplices in a crime against humanity." Speaking for Jubilee 2000, George Dore said, "Those financial institutions which have been cashing in debt repayments for loans used to perpetuate the apartheid era should make reparation, perhaps establishing a plan to support education and the creation of jobs."

The post-apartheid majority government of President Nelson Mandela has been hampered in its attempts to provide services for national reconstruction because of the debt burden it inherited from the previous white-controlled government.

"The Western world economy and government elites did not hesitate to openly support the sham reform policies of the apartheid regime," the report contended. Until comprehensive sanctions emerged in the mid-1980s, foreign funds financed the apartheid regime's survival strategy, with devastating consequences for the people of South Africa. Even after sanctions were imposed, the effect was "significantly reduced by several debt rescheduling operations and by the striking loyalty of German and Swiss bankers" to the regime, the report claims. "This is dirty money for which compensation should be paid."

The relationship between the Swiss and the apartheid regime, for example, was very profitable, earning an estimated \$300 million a year in interest and dividends between 1985 and 1993.

Yet sanctions played "an essential role in getting the regime to the negotiation table," the report said. "Towards the end of 1989, South Africa was faced with a serious financial crisis in foreign relations. On the other hand, the apartheid regime used foreign credits as an opportunity to postpone negotiations and to intensify its repression and war."

The report suggests that either 1989 or 1993, the year before Mandela was elected president, be used as "the cut-off year for the demands for debt cancellation and that profit transfers from 1985 to 1993 be considered as a reference for reparation demands."

### Latin Americans demand relief

According to World Bank figures, the debt burden for Latin American countries will reach \$706 billion this year. Most of the loans were made during the era of military regimes in the 1970s and the interest has been building ever since.

"The debt is not one more problem for us to face—it is the problem," said Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Andres Rodriguez of Honduras at a January conference sponsored by the Jubilee 2000 movement that brought together participants from 17 countries to discuss a strategy for debt relief.

"The Jubilee vision stands in stark contrast to today's international financial system which is governed, not by law, but instead by lawlessness," Ndungane of South Africa told the conference. Describing the debt as a "structural sin," the archbishop said that the debt crisis had "left most African and Latin American governments in hock to their old colonial masters, the leaders of the rich creditor nations, represented by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank."

Ndungane said that "the old colonial powers no longer send gunboats and troops to enforce their will on the people of Africa or Latin America—they send the IMF instead."

Methodist Bishop Bernardino Mandlate of Mozambique urged people in Africa and Latin America to join in a common struggle because "we suffer from the same disease. We have been made poor, and we have been kept poor. We haven't had space to breathe. The only way we'll get space to breathe is if we link arms and fight for that space together."

The conference took place a few blocks from some of the most devastating destruction unleashed by Hurricane Mitch last November, crippling 60 percent of Honduran infrastructure and destroying 70 percent of its crops.

"How the hell do you expect these people to build a solid infrastructure to withstand hurricanes when they are diverting so much of their precious resources to rich countries like Britain and Germany and the United States?" asked Ann Pettifor, director of the British Jubilee 2000 Coalition. While creditor nations announced a three-year moratorium on debt payments by hurricane-ravaged Honduras and Nicaragua, the unpaid interest would be added to outstanding debts.

Gilberto Aguirre of the Nicaraguan Council of Evangelical Churches pointed to the deception by the government and financial organizations who "are letting us believe we are off the hook when the truth is we'll have to pay later." He added, "We couldn't pay the debt before the storm, and we simply can't pay after the storm. The church is clear about this, and we've got to make the international financial organizations listen and understand."

--based on reports from Ecumenical News International.

99-041

## The response to Central America's hurricane disaster continues

by Kathryn McCormick

(ENS) Central America's massive hurricane recovery effort has faded from the front pages of newspapers across the U.S., but in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Belize, the work goes on. For Episcopalians, it means that money is still flowing and volunteers from throughout the church have signed up for missions to the devastated areas.

Some in the church who have visited Central America since Hurricane Mitch struck last October found they received as much as they gave.

"What an experience—but I was glad to be going home to my bed," was how Bruce Garner of Atlanta, Georgia, summed up his trip to that country in March. Garner is a member of the church's National Commission on HIV/AIDS, which was directed by the General Convention to study the issue of racism and HIV.

The commission, which has held hearings around the church, was invited by Honduras Bishop Leo Frade to listen to the experience of people with HIV/AIDS in Central America.

"The visit fit with our broader mission," Garner observed in a long statement he wrote after the commission's visit. "While Honduras has about 17 percent of the population of Central America, it has 50 percent of the AIDS cases in Central America. Honduras has some 12,000 cases of HIV with a total population smaller than that of Georgia."

Garner described what he saw of the aftermath of Mitch: washed-out roads, walls still streaked with high-water marks and hundreds of people living in cardboard-and-corrugated-tin shacks.

Then he met with some young Hondurans living with HIV. "There are no HIV drugs for adults," Garner learned. "The government makes promises but does not come through. Emphasis is placed on prevention as much as possible—not on caring for those already sick. The cost of antivirals is beyond the reach of all but the rich."

The Hondurans told of rampant discrimination, particularly the loss of jobs when employers learn of someone's HIV status. These employers included U.S. companies doing business in Honduras. Garner, who is HIV-positive, was so moved by the Hondurans' stories that he shared his own medicine with their doctor.

Later the commission visited a home for children with AIDS, two AIDS hospices for adults, a refugee settlement and the home for girls run under the direction of Frade's wife, Diana. Garner noted that a 2-year-old at the home had been diagnosed with HIV, but the other girls will not allow her to be sent to the home for children with HIV; they claim her as family.

### **Dioceses get involved**

Garner's experience left him deeply moved. But he is not the only Episcopalian from the U.S. who has journeyed to Central America or who has offered help after the storm, which, according to the U.S. State Department, left 9,000 dead and 9,000 still missing. Among the dioceses that already have sent groups and materials are:

**The Diocese of Texas** In addition to donating nearly \$700,000 to the Honduran recovery effort (including \$500,000 from the Cain Foundation established by Gordon and Mary Cain), 10 volunteers—eight of them students at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, plus one seminary spouse and a youth minister from Marshall, Texas—journeyed to Honduras in January to help distribute food and supplies. ETSS students are already planning to return to Honduras later this year. In addition a diocesan relief task force has been helping to organize other efforts to respond to the disaster.

**The Diocese of Newark** While it first set a \$10,000 goal for funds to send for hurricane relief, it received \$21,000, and its initial collection of materials filled two 40-foot containers.

**The Diocese of San Joaquin** Members of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Lodi, California, immediately filled cartons of gift packages for children, 65 packages specifically for infants and toddlers and more than 50 for children from 3 to 14. The cartons were sent to the "Banana Boat Team" in the Diocese of Texas that was working with the Chiquita Company, which had made a ship available to transport supplies to Central America.

Medical mission teams from the **Dioceses of West Texas and Mississippi** already have visited Honduras, and plans are under way in many other dioceses to get involved. The Diocese of Kentucky, for example is organizing a trip for youth and adults set tentatively for Aug. 3 through 14; the **Diocese of Central Florida** is planning a trip for 100 youth and adults in July.

Early this year, in an appearance at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., to express her thanks for the Diocese of Washington's outpouring of aid to its companion diocese in Honduras, Diana Frade said, "God does not bring gloom and doom. God is in the midst of turmoil and chaos. This [hurricane] was nature's doing. Our response is what matters."

The church is now contemplating a new phase for its aid, which will include development help from the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.

--Kathryn McCormick is associate director of Office of News and Information for the Episcopal Church.

99-042

## Episcopal Migration Ministries rated best in refugee resettlement

by Kathryn McCormick

(ENS) The Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) program has again been designated by the U.S. State Department as the best at providing the complicated and compassionate services needed to resettle refugees in the United States.

The announcement was made in early March by the Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, which strictly monitors the nine agencies with which it contracts to do the resettlement work. The bureau issues ratings annually, after compiling a "resettlement score" of statistics measuring the effectiveness of each agency's efforts.

"This is extraordinary," said Richard Parkins, director of EMM, "because we're among the smallest of the resettlement agencies." EMM last year placed 2,750 refugees; by contrast, the U.S. Catholic Conference placed about 21,000.

This is the second time in three years that EMM has been ranked Number 1, he said. Last year it was ranked Number 2.

"More than any of the scores can adequately reflect," wrote Theresa Rusch, the bureau's director of admissions, in a letter to Parkins, "the resettlement staff at EMM has consistently demonstrated a commitment to high quality refugee resettlement and willingness to cooperate with the bureau on a variety of resettlement issues."

"I take particular pride in what we and our diocesan affiliates have accomplished," Parkins said of his program's work, "because we are minimally staffed. Such an achievement doesn't come easily to a staff as strapped as we are or to local programs that are constantly seeking resources."

### Complicated network

With a handful of assistants, Parkins oversees a complicated network of diocesan affiliates, including many volunteers, who reach out to a huge array of sponsors, employers and others willing to provide support. Together they all work efficiently and compassionately to make new homes for people whose lives have been torn by war or political upheaval.

All of the people helped by the Migration Ministries office fall under criteria established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Parkins explained. The definition is very specific and applies only to persons who have left their home countries without a practical hope of returning to resume their lives. People who have been displaced

from their homes but who are still within their home countries' borders are not eligible for resettlement in the U.S.

Declaring that bringing refugees to the U.S. "is a team effort in every sense of the word," Parkins said a refugee's journey to resettlement typically begins with applications and interviews while she is still in a refugee camp overseas. About 80 percent of the refugees are women and their dependents, Parkins said.

Migration Ministries does the paperwork to get the refugee to the U.S., he said. Once here, the refugee is placed in the care of a sponsor, and is given a job and a place to live as well as other support.

"It's all a very structured system with many requirements," Parkins said, but he stressed that an agency is judged not simply by its ability to follow the rules but to "do good placement." That means, he said, "finding a good fit" for a refugee with a sponsor who is sensitive to her needs, an employer who will help her keep her job and a community where she can find help from a range of people, including some from the refugee's home country.

About half of EMM's caseload involves reuniting family members, he said. The other half involves people who are on their own. All refugees are helped, regardless of their religious beliefs—and, Parkins added, the resettlement effort is both ecumenical and interfaith.

### **Refugees need friends**

The Episcopal Migration Ministries operation is funded primarily by the U.S. State Department, which pays EMM \$740 per refugee to cover costs.

"Obviously, that doesn't begin to cover the actual costs," Parkins said. "We depend heavily on donations, dedicated volunteer help and diocesan and parish support." Most of the money received by the EMM office is passed on to its diocesan affiliates who carry out the actual resettlement process.

Migration Ministries and its affiliates currently are working to get more churches involved in sponsoring refugees. At this point, there are 14 to 15 million refugees worldwide, he said, "but we're working with them one at a time, just like Jesus did most of his ministry."

"What refugees need most are friends," Parkins said. "They've been uprooted, often they've languished in awful refugee camps. They are victims of unimaginable violence and tragedy, and of their own despair. We have to restore each refugee's confidence in himself or herself; help them believe again in the possibility of compassion."

--Kathryn McCormick is associate director of the Office of News and Information of the Episcopal Church.

99-043

## **Lutheran bishops wrestle with proposal for full communion with Episcopal Church**

by James Solheim

(ENS) Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) tabled a resolution that would have urged the Churchwide Assembly to "cast a strong, positive vote in favor of the adoption" of Called to Common Mission (CCM), the proposal for full communion with the Episcopal Church.

The Conference of Bishops, representing the ELCA's 65 regional synods in the 5.2 million-member denomination, tabled the resolution at the March meeting in Arizona, fearing that an endorsement would be too divisive. The bishops did approve a statement to be used at synod assemblies, clarifying some of the major elements of the CCM, a revision of the original Concordat of Agreement calling for full communion. Among its major points, it said:

- there is no requirement for the ELCA to eventually adopt the three-fold order of ministry or to elect bishops for life;
- there is no "defined role" for the presiding bishop or synodical bishops once their terms are completed;
- ordination of clergy will continue at synodical worship services and in congregations;
- the ELCA will receive ordained clergy from other traditions on its roster, "some of whom will not have been ordained by bishops in the historic episcopate";
- the Episcopal Church "accepts fully, and without reservation, present Lutheran pastors and bishops who are not in the historic episcopate", and
- the ELCA "receives the historic episcopate as a sign of and service to the continuity and unity of the church and in no way as a guarantee of the faithful transmission of the faith."

#### **More clarity over role of bishops**

"We will have a deeply divided church by the end of this spring's synod assemblies," warned Bishop David Olson of the Minneapolis Area Synod. Bishop Rick Foss of the Eastern North Dakota Synod said, "As I listen to the church I don't think it will pass." He opposes the CCM "because I think it's the wrong way to do mission," although he admitted that the resolution clarifying its proposals may help at the Churchwide Assembly in August.

Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson said that he was convinced that "God is calling us to enter into this relationship" with the Episcopal Church because CCM "gives us the opportunity to identify more fully" with Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17. "Some people sincerely believe this means a loss of our identity. I would say it's more a way for us to express our identity."

Opposition to the CCM and the earlier Concordat is focused on the role of bishops. Lutherans in this country, unlike some of their Nordic cousins, did not embrace the historic episcopate, the succession of bishops as a sign of unity that stretches back to the earliest time of the church.

In adopting the statement on "The Office of the Bishop in the ELCA," the bishops hoped to move beyond the fight over the historic episcopate to the reality of the office, according to Bishop E. Roy Riley, Jr. of the New Jersey Synod, who proposed the resolution. "If we would get comfortable with that, then I think we can be comfortable with ecumenical full communion with the Presbyterians, with Moravians, with Episcopalian and whoever else," he said.

#### **Some bishops endorse proposal**

Following the meeting, bishops in the eastern and New England synods endorsed CCM. Eight bishops in Maryland, Delaware and West Virginia issued a statement urging the Churchwide Assembly "to cast a strong, positive vote in favor of its adoption." The bishops said that they were convinced that full communion is "obedient to the prayer of Jesus, is congruent with our confession as evangelical Lutherans, and is dependent on God's call to mission under the Gospel."

The bishops expressed appreciation for the significant changes in the CCM proposal over the original Concordat. They cited the new emphasis on the priesthood of all the baptized; affirmation of the historic episcopate as a sign but not a guarantee of the church's unity and doctrine; a recognition that the ELCA accepts the historic episcopate but not the three-fold orders of ministry; and the revised process for the installation of Lutheran bishops.

In a similar action, seven bishops in the church's neighboring synods in Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey called the CCM "a critical and marvelous opportunity" to link two Christian traditions. Their statement agreed that the revised proposal was "clearer and more appropriate to our American Lutheran heritage."

The faculty of the Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia unanimously endorsed CCM. Its statement said that the Lutheran witness to the Gospel "is the strongest and best gift we offer in any ecumenical conversation," adding that full communion would "offer us new opportunities to witness to that Gospel with our Episcopalian brothers and sisters in the world."

--James Solheim is the Episcopal Church's director of news and information. This article is based on reports from the ELCA by Jack Brooks, director of the Office of News and Information.

99-044

## Boston conference debates full communion between Lutherans and Episcopaliens

by Tracy Sukraw

(ENS) It might be a bold step for ecumenism, but full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Episcopal Church is also a natural development, according to speakers at a March 23 program at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

With voting delegates to the ELCA's Churchwide Assembly preparing to consider a revised proposal for full communion this August, the program was a timely occasion for Lutherans and Episcopaliens to hear about and discuss together the process that could lead to a whole new relationship between their churches.

"If we really are agreed on the essentials of the Christian faith, if we have full interchangeability of ordained ministries, if we have a full sharing of the Eucharist, if our leaders understand and recognize in each other sufficiently compatible doctrinal terms so that we trust one another theologically and are confident in working together—only then will full communion be given the momentum to carry out common mission," Bishop Christopher Epting of the Diocese of Iowa told the assembly of about 50 Lutherans and Episcopaliens from around New England. Epting chaired the Episcopal Church's participation on the Lutheran-Episcopal team responsible for drafting the proposal, titled "Called to Common Mission" (CCM).

"It is often said, why can't we do a lot of this now? Well, we can. The point is, we haven't, historically. So full communion will give us the impetus to do some of the things that we probably already do together," Epting said.

Sponsored by the congregational studies and Anglican, global and ecumenical studies offices at Episcopal Divinity School, the program also featured the Rev. Dr. Don S. Armentrout, an ELCA pastor and associate dean and church history professor at the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee; retired Church of Sweden bishop Krister Stendahl, who is a former dean and professor emeritus at Harvard Divinity School; and the Rev. Jane S. Gould, the Episcopal chaplain at the Lutheran-Episcopal Ministry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.).

#### A move for unity

Decades of Lutheran-Episcopal dialogues resulted in a 1991 proposal for full communion called the Concordat of Agreement. The 1997 General Convention of the Episcopal Church overwhelmingly approved the Concordat, but the ELCA's Churchwide Assembly narrowly defeated it that same year, asking for a revision that would address reservations expressed by Lutherans.

Much of the ELCA opposition was and remains focused on acceptance of the historic episcopate, a succession of bishops dating back to the earliest days of the Christian church. The Episcopal Church has maintained it, but most Lutheran churches outside of Scandinavia did not.

"In the history of the church there has been a lack of reconciliation at the level of the episcopate," Armentrout said, reminding the gathering in his lively presentation that Lutheran churches did not dispense with the historic episcopate on theological grounds, but did so because of the practical consequences of the Reformation. "You cannot go through Luther and find a diatribe against the episcopate. You cannot find it in the Lutheran confessions. It's not there. We simply in the 16<sup>th</sup> century dropped the historic episcopate because the majority of bishops did not come into the Lutheran movement. They remained as Roman Catholics. What is being asked of us, as I understand it, now, is to be reincorporated into the historic episcopate. I would argue for the historic episcopate not on the basis of apostolicity, but on the basis of catholicity. I would argue that to be reincorporated into that historic episcopate is a move in the right direction for unity," Armentrout said.

Stendahl urged Lutherans to seek the means for reconciling their doctrine with episcopal polity in article seven of the Augsburg Confession—the 1530 Lutheran confession of faith. "If there is basic agreement on the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments, then all the rest is secondary, not that important," he said. "We have nothing against the fact that the Episcopalians think that [the historic episcopate] is more important than we do. Why should we? That would be a kind of tit-for-tat, secularization of theology. We need to liberate our Lutheran freedom according to the Augsburg Confession," he said. "It is enormously important that the *episkope* not be used as an excuse for lack of courage," he said.

Epting said that CCM "really continues to hold up those areas where we have yet to find some agreement in trying to find a way forward." Among the changes found in it is a provision that the ELCA may be brought into the historic episcopate through other Lutheran bodies of the world, such as the Church of Sweden, which have maintained it, as well as the Episcopal Church.

CCM also acknowledges that the succession of bishops is only one way through which the church's apostolic succession is expressed. "One of the great breakthroughs in this dialogue has been speaking of the apostolic succession in a much broader sense. The

apostolic succession is much broader than simply the historic episcopate and is guarded by, in addition to the episcopate, the apostolic Scriptures, the ancient creeds, the celebration of the sacraments," Epting said.

#### **Emphasis on common mission**

In addition to the fact that it is shorter and uses more accessible language than did the Concordat, other changes include a more direct emphasis on common mission, as well as the ministry of all who are baptized. And it does not require the ordination of deacons, since the threefold ordained ministry of bishops, priests and deacons is not present in the ELCA as it is in the Episcopal Church.

"The initial take that we [on the drafting team] had when the document went out was that it is a good document, that it was improved, that it would probably pass and perhaps pass very strongly," Epting said. "Our desire certainly would be that when it goes to the Churchwide Assembly that it would pass by 85 percent or more. Sixty-seven percent would probably not be good. We don't want to leave behind internal chaos as a result of this movement," he said.

"One reason why the Episcopal Church has not had wide distribution of this document yet is because it is kind of a moving target. Until the Churchwide Assembly votes, we won't know exactly what we have to do on our side in 2000," he said, referring to next year's General Convention of the Episcopal Church, where a proposal approved by the ELCA would be considered. "There is Lutheran opposition, and I have to recognize that I live in the peak of a lot of that opposition in the upper Midwest. I also recognize that there is a good bit of support among Lutherans across the country. It's hard to get a reading as to where the votes are going to fall, and I'm not sure anyone would be able to predict that at this point. I'm still hopeful," he said.

#### **Chaplaincy provides model**

Before program participants gathered for small group discussions, Chaplain Jane Gould offered what she called the "grassroots perspective" of M.I.T.'s 26-year-old Lutheran-Episcopal Ministry, or L.E.M.

"L.E.M. is a model for sustained life together, abiding together in respectful, sometimes rocky, relationship. L.E.M. is a model for full communion," she said. The ministry, which she staffs along with an ELCA chaplain, offers joint worship, fellowship meals, Bible study and mission project opportunities for an international group of 20 to 30 M.I.T. students each week.

"In addition to our formal study, I think the important thing is the informal education, where the students really have to be able to teach their own tradition to others, which means they really need to be able to own and claim their own tradition. ... The questions that get asked and the conversations that we have come out of being in sustained, committed relationship." She quoted paragraph 14 of CCM, which calls on the people of both churches "to receive and share this relationship as they grow together in full communion."

"It seems to me that that's the commitment we have at M.I.T.," Gould said.

With such collaborative ministries between Lutherans and Episcopalians already going on, she said, some wonder why an official process for full communion is necessary. One reason is that there are not many examples of where Lutherans and Episcopalians are working in a close relationship. "If we want to incarnate unity in Christ, that isn't good enough. And my sense is that parishes—as significantly more conservative entities than chaplaincies and certainly places that are less likely to engage in innovation—need an institutional push to engage in this kind of work. I'd also say that we desperately need institutional coordination for communication and collaboration that is called for in CCM," she added.

—Tracy J. Sukraw is editor of *The Episcopal Times*, the newspaper for the Diocese of Massachusetts.

99-045

## Griswold writes to bishops to explain resignation of bishop in New Jersey

by James Solheim

(ENS) Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold wrote March 16 to the bishops of the church to explain the resignation of Bishop Joe Morris Doss in the Diocese of New Jersey.

After years of controversy and polarization, Doss resigned at the diocesan convention March 12, expressing regrets that he would not be the one to lead the diocese into the new millennium.

"As presiding bishop I am grateful that the leadership of the diocese and Joe were able to reach an agreement that may lead to healing and reconciliation," Griswold wrote. He revealed the details of the arrangement, based on a sabbatical until September 30, 2001. "The financial package is one of generosity and recognition that Joe was underpaid while he was the active bishop of New Jersey."

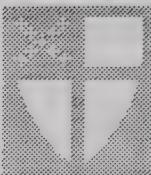
The terms include full salary and benefits until retirement, additional payments to his pension after retirement, educational costs for his children, payments for a mortgage, an automobile and moving expenses, as well as a payment of \$100,000 "payable at any time within the next three years at the bishop's request." Value of the package was estimated at about \$1.2 million.

"At the request of the diocesan leadership, the Presiding Bishop's Office will immediately begin discussing an appropriate interim bishop to serve as soon as possible and until a new bishop is elected after October 1, 2001," Griswold wrote. "Everyone knows that pain and brokenness will not disappear overnight, but that with the prayers of the whole church and with the commitment of the people of New Jersey, God's grace will lead to reconciliation and wholeness."

Griswold quoted Bishop Clay Matthews of the Office for Pastoral Development, who represented him at the convention: "There are no victors—but rather a people who, like the Hebrews in the wilderness and the disciples on the road to Jerusalem, look to an uncertain future while trusting in God to guide us so that we can and see and respond to the opportunities for healing and reconciliation."

Pointing out that Doss' decision took "great courage," Griswold concluded his letter by asking that "reconciliation and healing may come in the Diocese of New Jersey" and that the future for the Doss family "may be a time of recovery and blessing."

--James Solheim is director of the Office of News and Information for the Episcopal Church.



# news digest

99-038D

## Episcopalians join other churches in campaign for compassion in Kosovo

(ENS) Episcopalians in the United States have joined Christians around the world in an outpouring of compassion for victims of the conflict in Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians are systematically being slaughtered or driven from their villages.

A brief report sent throughout the church said that the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief has been receiving contributions and channeling emergency assistance through Action by Churches Together. Parishes received bulletin inserts urging them to contribute generously to the Fund to support further assistance to the refugees—including support for their longer-term resettlement and rehabilitation (see text in *News Features*).

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the church's refugee resettlement and advocacy program, has been working with partner agencies to urge the U.S. government to increase humanitarian assistance to those countries which suddenly find themselves hosting thousands of refugees. The agencies also underscored the importance of returning the Kosovar refugees to their homes.

In the meantime, the church's Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C., monitors the response of Congress and the Administration, working with ecumenical partners to press for an early and peaceful solution to the crisis in the Balkans.

In a March 26 statement, Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold said that "the acts of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo are deeply repugnant and stir up memories of ethnic hatreds that have marred the course of history." While the use of "overwhelming military power" by NATO forces "will be widely debated," Griswold said that he was "personally torn by this decision because its purpose is noble while the means are so violent. Christ calls us into relationship and the present course leads us to further alienation from one another," he said. "Yet for us to stand by and allow the genocide to continue is also intolerable."

Griswold deplored the failure to resolve the conflict through diplomacy represents "a profound failure of the human spirit and will. It also reveals the insidious way in which religious perspectives, grounded in God's all embracing compassion and love for humankind, can be subverted and made to serve the idol of ethnic or national self-justification," he said. And he appealed to President Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia "to reconsider his options and pursue the path of peace through negotiation."

99-039D

## Archbishop of Canterbury speaks at UN conference, visits Alabama and Sewanee

(ENS) Peace among nations is impossible without peace among major religions, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey told about 1,000 people March 15 to conclude the Theological World Assembly.

"Religion is the missing dimension in statecraft today," Carey said. "We need a new dialogue between the secular and religious world."

The Thanksgiving World Assembly brought religious leaders from 33 nations to Dallas to kick off the United Nations' celebration of 2000: An International Year of Thanksgiving.

Carey was the keynote speaker at closing ceremonies, which included a celebration of harvest festivals from around the world and a call to religious leaders to foster a sense of commonality in the next millennium. The archbishop said western secular thought, buttressed by the explosion of technology, offers a false security that's leading to social decay. "I question what kind of society is simply content with material wealth," Carey said. "And I question the hubris that often accompanies western thinking today."

Giving thanks on a continuous basis is the core value for virtually every major religion, Carey said. Technological advances are also a gift from God to his people, the archbishop said, listing ways a sense of gratitude helps us reach our full potential.

"A spirit of thanksgiving makes us tolerant of other people, faiths and beliefs and forces us to make room for others, especially minorities," Carey said. "Tolerance is written into the codes of all major religions. Giving thanks to God through regular prayer and worship allows us a more generous understanding of the world around us."

Before the conference in Dallas, Carey stopped at Sewanee's University of the South to accept an honorary doctor of divinity degree on March 12. Dean Guy Lytle of the School of Theology said that it was a reminder "that we are part of the worldwide Anglican Communion." The Careys also visited the Diocese of Alabama and the Cathedral Church of the Advent March 13-14, addressing the clergy of the diocese and the chapter of the cathedral and their spouses at a dinner given in his honor and preached to overflow crowds.

Carey spoke with what was described as "clarity and compassion as one acquainted with and touched by the needs and sufferings of many Christians throughout the world, and with theological candor and courage as he outlined mission imperatives for the Church in the twenty-first century."

**99-040D**

## Church leaders join campaign for relief of international debt

(ENS) Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane of Cape Town has joined other church leaders in the international campaign seeking to cancel the debts of nations in the developing world.

In South Africa, Jubilee 2000, a broad-based campaign pressing for the alleviation of debts, has released a report on the role played by Swiss, German, British and American banks in supporting the apartheid regime through "odious" loans. About 90 percent of the nation's long-term debts are owed to the four creditor countries.

Ndungane called on Swiss and German banks to make reparation because they were "accomplices in a crime against humanity." Speaking for Jubilee 2000, George Dore said, "Those financial institutions which have been cashing in debt repayments for loans used to perpetuate the apartheid era should make reparation, perhaps establishing a plan to support education and the creation of jobs."

The post-apartheid majority government of President Nelson Mandela has been hampered in its attempts to provide services for national reconstruction because of the debt burden it inherited from the previous white-controlled government.

"The Western world economy and government elites did not hesitate to openly support the sham reform policies of the apartheid regime," the report contended. Until comprehensive sanctions emerged in the mid-1980s, foreign funds financed the apartheid regime's survival strategy, with devastating consequences for the people of South Africa. Even after sanctions were imposed, the effect was "significantly reduced by several debt rescheduling operations and by the striking loyalty of German and Swiss bankers" to the regime, the report claims. "This is dirty money for which compensation should be paid."

The relationship between the Swiss and the apartheid regime, for example, was very profitable, earning an estimated \$300 million a year in interest and dividends between 1985 and 1993.

Yet sanctions played "an essential role in getting the regime to the negotiation table," the report said. "Towards the end of 1989, South Africa was faced with a serious financial crisis in foreign relations. On the other hand, the apartheid regime used foreign credits as an opportunity to postpone negotiations and to intensify its repression and war."

The report suggests that either 1989 or 1993, the year before Mandela was elected president, be used as "the cut-off year for the demands for debt cancellation and that profit transfers from 1985 to 1993 be considered as a reference for reparation demands."

**99-041D**

## **The response to Central America's hurricane disaster continues**

(ENS) Central America's massive hurricane recovery effort has faded from the front pages of newspapers across the U.S., but in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Belize, the work goes on. For Episcopalians, it means that money is still flowing and volunteers from throughout the church have signed up for missions to the devastated areas.

Some in the church who have visited Central America since Hurricane Mitch struck last October found they received as much as they gave.

"What an experience—but I was glad to be going home to my bed," was how Bruce Garner of Atlanta, Georgia, summed up his trip to that country in March. Garner is a member of the church's National Commission on HIV/AIDS, which was directed by the General Convention to study the issue of racism and HIV.

The commission, which has held hearings around the church, was invited by Honduras Bishop Leo Frade to listen to the experience of people with HIV/AIDS in Central America.

"The visit fit with our broader mission," Garner observed in a long statement he wrote after the commission's visit. "While Honduras has about 17 percent of the population of Central America, it has 50 percent of the AIDS cases in Central America. Honduras has some 12,000 cases of HIV with a total population smaller than that of Georgia."

Garner met with some young Hondurans living with HIV. "There are no HIV drugs for adults," Garner learned. "The government makes promises but does not come through. Emphasis is placed on prevention as much as possible—not on caring for those already sick. The cost of antivirals is beyond the reach of all but the rich. Later the commission visited a

home for children with AIDS, two AIDS hospices for adults, a refugee settlement and the home for girls run under the direction of Frade's wife, Diana.

Garner's experience left him deeply moved. But he is not the only Episcopalian from the U.S. who has journeyed to Central America or who has offered help after the storm, which, according to the U.S. State Department, left 9,000 dead and 9,000 still missing. Among the dioceses that already have sent groups and materials are:

**The Diocese of Texas** In addition to donating nearly \$700,000 to the Honduran recovery effort (including \$500,000 from the Cain Foundation established by Gordon and Mary Cain), 10 volunteers—eight of them students at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, plus one seminary spouse and a youth minister from Marshall, Texas—journeyed to Honduras in January to help distribute food and supplies. ETSS students are already planning to return to Honduras later this year. In addition a diocesan relief task force has been helping to organize other efforts to respond to the disaster.

**The Diocese of Newark**. While it first set a \$10,000 goal for funds to send for hurricane relief, it received \$21,000, and its initial collection of materials filled two 40-foot containers.

**The Diocese of San Joaquin**. Members of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Lodi, California, immediately filled cartons of gift packages for children, 65 packages specifically for infants and toddlers and more than 50 for children from 3 to 14. The cartons were sent to the "Banana Boat Team" in the Diocese of Texas that was working with the Chiquita Company, which had made a ship available to transport supplies to Central America.

Medical mission teams from the **Dioceses of West Texas and Mississippi** already have visited Honduras, and plans are under way in many other dioceses for missions there: the Diocese of Kentucky is organizing a trip for youth and adults set tentatively for Aug. 3 through 14; the **Diocese of Central Florida** is planning a trip for 100 youth and adults in July.

99-042D

## Episcopal Migration Ministries rated best in refugee resettlement

(ENS) The Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) program has again been designated by the U.S. State Department as the best at providing the complicated and compassionate services needed to resettle refugees in the United States.

The announcement was made in early March by the Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, which strictly monitors the nine agencies with which it contracts to do the resettlement work. The bureau issues ratings annually, after compiling a "resettlement score" of statistics measuring the effectiveness of each agency's efforts.

"This is extraordinary," said Richard Parkins, director of EMM, "because we're among the smallest of the resettlement agencies." EMM last year placed 2,750 refugees; by contrast, the U.S. Catholic Conference placed about 21,000.

This is the second time in three years that EMM has been ranked Number 1, he said. Last year it was ranked Number 2.

"I take particular pride in what we and our diocesan affiliates have accomplished," Parkins said of his program's work, "because we are minimally staffed. Such an achievement doesn't come easily to a staff as strapped as we are or to local programs that are constantly seeking resources."

### **Complicated network**

With a handful of assistants, Parkins oversees a complicated network of diocesan affiliates, including many volunteers, who reach out to a huge array of sponsors, employers and others willing to provide support. Together they all work efficiently and compassionately to make new homes for people whose lives have been torn by war or political upheaval.

"It's all a very structured system with many requirements," Parkins said, but he stressed that an agency is judged not simply by its ability to follow the rules but to "do good placement." That means, he said, "finding a good fit" for a refugee with a sponsor who is sensitive to her needs, an employer who will help her keep her job and a community where she can find help from a range of people, including some from the refugee's home country.

About half of EMM's caseload involves reuniting family members, he said. The other half involves people who are on their own. All refugees are helped, regardless of their religious beliefs—and, Parkins added, the resettlement effort is both ecumenical and interfaith.

### **Refugees need friends**

The Episcopal Migration Ministries operation is funded primarily by the U.S. State Department, which pays EMM \$740 per refugee to cover costs.

"Obviously, that doesn't begin to cover the actual costs," Parkins said. "We depend heavily on donations, dedicated volunteer help and diocesan and parish support." Most of the money received by the EMM office is passed on to its diocesan affiliates who carry out the actual resettlement process.

99-043D

## **Lutheran bishops wrestle with proposal for full communion with Episcopal Church**

(ENS) Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) tabled a resolution that would have urged the Churchwide Assembly to "cast a strong, positive vote in favor of the adoption" of Called to Common Mission (CCM), the proposal for full communion with the Episcopal Church.

The Conference of Bishops, representing the ELCA's 65 regional synods in the 5.2 million-member denomination, tabled the resolution at the March meeting in Arizona, fearing that an endorsement would be too divisive. The bishops did approve a statement to be used at synod assemblies, clarifying some of the major elements of the CCM, a revision of the original Concordat of Agreement calling for full communion. Among its major points, it said:

- there is no requirement for the ELCA to eventually adopt the three-fold order of ministry or to elect bishops for life;
- there is no "defined role" for the presiding bishop or synodical bishops once their terms are completed;
- ordination of clergy will continue at synodical worship services and in congregations;

- the ELCA will receive ordained clergy from other traditions on its roster, “some of whom will not have been ordained by bishops in the historic episcopate”;
- the Episcopal Church “accepts fully, and without reservation, present Lutheran pastors and bishops who are not in the historic episcopate”; and
- the ELCA “receives the historic episcopate as a sign of and service to the continuity and unity of the church and in no way as a guarantee of the faithful transmission of the faith.”

Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson said that he was convinced that “God is calling us to enter into this relationship” with the Episcopal Church because CCM “gives us the opportunity to identify more fully” with Jesus’ prayer for unity in John 17. “Some people sincerely believe this means a loss of our identity. I would say it’s more a way for us to express our identity.”

**99-044D**

## Boston conference debates full communion between Lutherans and Episcopalian

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With voting delegates to the ELCA’s Churchwide Assembly preparing to consider a revised proposal for full communion this August, the program was a timely occasion for Lutherans and Episcopalian to hear about and discuss together the process that could lead to a whole new relationship between their churches.

“If we really are agreed on the essentials of the Christian faith, if we have full interchangeability of ordained ministries, if we have a full sharing of the Eucharist, if our leaders understand and recognize in each other sufficiently compatible doctrinal terms so that we trust one another theologically and are confident in working together—only then will full communion be given the momentum to carry out common mission,” Bishop Christopher Epting of the Diocese of Iowa told the assembly of about 50 Lutherans and Episcopalian from around New England. Epting chaired the Episcopal Church’s participation on the Lutheran-Episcopal team responsible for drafting the proposal, titled “Called to Common Mission” (CCM).

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on theological grounds, but did so because of the practical consequences of the Reformation. "You cannot go through Luther and find a diatribe against the episcopate. You cannot find it in the Lutheran confessions. It's not there. We simply in the 16<sup>th</sup> century dropped the historic episcopate because the majority of bishops did not come into the Lutheran movement. They remained as Roman Catholics. What is being asked of us, as I understand it, now, is to be reincorporated into the historic episcopate. I would argue for the historic episcopate not on the basis of apostolicity, but on the basis of catholicity. I would argue that to be reincorporated into that historic episcopate is a move in the right direction for unity," Armentrout said.

**99-045D**

## Griswold writes to bishops to explain resignation of bishop in New Jersey

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# news briefs

99-046

## Israel accused of trying to “Judaize” Jerusalem

(ENI) Dr. Emil Jarjoui, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization's higher ministerial commission for church affairs, was speaking to the media on March 24, after talks in Geneva with senior officials of the World Council of Churches (WCC), when he strongly criticized Israeli policy towards Jerusalem, accusing the Israeli authorities of trying to “Judaize the city.”

Jarjoui, an Orthodox Christian born in Jerusalem, said, “The Israelis have declared that [Jerusalem] is their eternal capital. They are trying to Judaize the city, to change its geography and demography, cutting it off from the rest of the [territory administered by the] Palestinian government.”

The status of Jerusalem was one of the issues of the Oslo peace accords signed by Israel and the PLO in 1993. Under the accords, Jerusalem's status was to be resolved during further discussion on a final peace deal.

According to the report, Israel refers to both West Jerusalem and the city's eastern part, which Israel captured in 1967, as its undivided capital. Most countries reject Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem, saying the city's status is unresolved. Palestinians want East Jerusalem to be the capital of a future Palestinian state.

“We feel that Jerusalem is our city. It is our roots. We were born there, we will stay there,” said Jarjoui.

He praised the WCC for its statement on Jerusalem issued by its eighth assembly held in Harare, Zimbabwe, last December. The assembly stated that Jerusalem's status must be decided under international sponsorship and as part of, rather than after, a comprehensive settlement on the Middle East. The assembly also said that access to the holy places of Jerusalem must be secured for all faiths and that Palestinians must have assurances on their rights to free access, property, building and residency.

## India's churches call for tough action on Christian attacks

(ENI) Prompted by the latest attack on Christians in India, more than 200 church delegates at a national “Convention on Poverty” in New Delhi went out of their way to complete their final day's business on March 18, so they could participate in a silent march against the violence.

Almost 1,500 Christians were left homeless when their houses were burned in Ranalai village, in the district of Gajapati in the state of Orissa, in eastern India. Two months earlier, the state of Orissa made international news when Graham Staines, an Australian Christian social worker, and his two sons were burnt to death.

According to K. Rajaratnam, president of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), the delegates participation in the march was “a spontaneous reaction from the convention to the burning of poor Christians' houses.” In addition, Rajaratnam and six other convention attendees were escorted by police to India's prime minister's office so they could

hand deliver a written statement. But the prime minister was unavailable and they refused to leave it with his staff.

The statement read, "We affirm once again that the atrocities against the Christians are a reaction to the ongoing empowerment process of the oppressed and the marginalized Dalit [low caste] and tribal communities. The acts of violence, we feel, [are] premeditated and planned action pursued by the fanatic, fundamentalist outfits and vested interests who want to curb the expression of freedom and dignity by hitherto oppressed sections of our society."

In addition, the statement called for "the resources of the nation [to be put] at the service for the upliftment of the poor communities, as it is poverty which continues to make them vulnerable."

Rajaratnam said that when the "first wave of attacks" on Christians took place in the state of Gujarat, in western India, an NCCI delegation visited the area and met Gujarat's state governor and other local officials. The delegation also met India's federal president, K.R. Narayanan and called on him to provide protection for Christians.

"They all assured us, it will not happen again," said Rajaratnam. "We also thought this was a passing phenomenon. It occurred again in Orissa. Now we are facing the third phase." He went on to say that tough measures were needed to put an end to the violence.

## **Anglican woman urges Japan to be good Samaritans to poor**

(ENI) Rosemary Kinyanjui, national coordinator of the Mother's Union in Kenya, called on Japanese Christians to lobby for their country to be a "good Samaritan" not "a thief" by forgiving the debts owed to Japan by impoverished nations like Kenya.

Speaking at an international symposium on debt cancellation held in Tokyo March 14, at Sophia University, Kinyanjui, an Anglican, said that her nation and its women and children were suffering from the negative impact of its foreign debt. She noted that Kenya owed a huge debt to the Overseas Economic Cooperation Foundation (OECF,) a Japanese governmental agency which lends money to developing countries.

"We need a good Samaritan who could help us out of the burden of debt. That's what I want from Christians in Japan," said Kinyanjui.

But Kinhide Mushakoji, a Roman Catholic specializing in international politics at Ferris University in Yokohama, Japan, said that he agreed that debt relief was a worthy act for "a good samaritan," but Japanese people were not thieves.

Nonetheless, he said the country should make "reparation for our wrong-doing." He added that saying sorry was not enough and that action was needed.

## **Bishop to withdraw funds if deal is finalized with Robertson**

(ENS) According to a report, Richard Holloway, primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, has threatened to withdraw his church's funds from the Bank of Scotland if it completes a deal with television evangelist Pat Robertson.

The Bank of Scotland plans to collaborate with Robertson on a banking-by-phone system which would sell financial products to his Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) viewers. The bank plans to own 65 percent of the subsidiary with Robertson owning 25 percent and serving as its chair. The Wisconsin-based holding company Marshall & Ilsley Corporation would be responsible for actually providing the services.

The report went on to say that Holloway, a supporter of equal rights for all gays and lesbians intends to convince other churches to disinvest their shares if this deal with the anti-gay/lesbian preacher goes through.

Robertson's homophobic views have been known for years. He reiterated them last year when he said Orlando, Florida, would be hit by hurricanes for flying rainbow banners during Gay Pride Week.

Stonewall, the British gay and lesbian group, reported that top officers in the Bank of Scotland had been refusing media interviews and sent a memo to all its branches instructing them to tell callers that Robertson's positions have been "blown up by the media."

## Euthanasia ads receive criticism

(ENI) An Australian television advertisement that shows a dying woman pleading for the right to legal euthanasia has reignited debate in Australia about the issue and prompted strong opposition from churches and other Christian groups.

The advertisement, made for the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New South Wales (NSW), was approved for broadcast on the grounds that it advocated a change in the law, rather than advocating suicide or assisted death.

In a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Anglican Archbishop Harry Goodhew of Sydney said the euthanasia campaign "appears to be exploiting the suffering of one desperately ill woman to further its political ends.

"I sincerely empathize with her plight. I have seen close friends die with terminal cancer. While their pain was also great, I saw the hope that they maintained and offered to others throughout," he said. "As a Christian, I want to offer the hope that life can be worth living. The antidote to the hopeless despair faced by terminally ill people is not an accelerated death. Rather it is the opportunity for a life with God."

The euthanasia debate has flared up in Australia several times in recent years, in particular after the Northern Territory legalized the practice in 1996. Four people used the legislation to die with the help of their doctor. However, the Federal Parliament overturned the law in 1997 because the Northern Territory doesn't have full statehood in Australia's political system.

## Boesak sentenced to six years in jail

(ENI) Allan Boesak, former Reformed Church leader and campaigner against apartheid, was sentenced to six years in jail, on March 24, for fraud and theft.

According to the report, despite a plea for leniency from Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Boesak was sentenced for misappropriating \$210,000 in donor funds channeled through the anti-apartheid organization, Foundation for Peace (FPJ) of which he was director.

"I am deeply distressed at the conviction and sentencing of Allan Boesak. He played a leading role in the struggle against an evil system," Tutu said in a statement. "I submitted an affidavit to the court asking that he be spared gaol [jail.]"

His statement continued that he "respectfully" disagreed with the judge, but the issue was in the hands of the court.

Judge John Foxcroft said before sentencing Boesak, "I know of no reason in law why a person who has done a great deal of good for his country should be exonerated and not be punished for common law offences."

Boesak is free on his own recognizance and his lawyer is working on an appeal.

## Indian government not celebrating 2000 as ‘Year of Christ’

(ENI) The Indian government has reneged on plans to celebrate the year 2000 as the “Year of Christ.”

According to a report, India’s Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was persuaded not to commence with the celebration of Christ by his Minister of Human Resources Development Murali Manohar Joshi. Joshi was quoted in the *Times of India* as saying, “Christianity is a foreign religion.”

He proposed a plan to observe next year as the “Year of Sanskrit.” (Sanskrit is India’s ancient language in which Hindu scriptures are written.) This celebration would be part of a larger United Nations observation called “Year of the Culture of Peace”.

K. Rajaratnam, president of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), said he had “never expected” the government to agree to make the year 2000 the Year of Christ.

“So, if they are not going to do that, I am not surprised,” he said. “As far as churches are concerned, this is not something to be disappointed about.”

He said that churches would hold “massive” celebrations of the Christian anniversary and that the NCCI was planning joint celebrations with Catholics. He added that decisions by the government to recognize important Sikh and Buddhist jubilees, but not celebrate a year of Christ, “shows its true colors.”

## Directory for reaching out to inactive Catholics is published

(USCC) “A Time to Listen... A Time to Heal, A Resource Directory for Reaching Out to Inactive Catholics” has been published by the Committee on Evangelization of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB).

The resource directory is part of a concerted effort by the Committee on Evangelization to assist diocesan and parish staffs in reaching out to alienated and inactive members of the Catholic Church. First envisioned in 1997, and prepared with the help of leaders, lay and clergy, actively engaged in this ministry, “A Time to Listen... A Time to Heal” is intended to further implement Pope John Paul II’s call for reconciliation in preparation for the Jubilee Year 2000.

Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan of Santa Fe is chairman of the committee. “We need old-fashioned zeal in reaching out to inactive Catholics and in helping them return to the fullness of faith,” he said. “This directory will provide models for doing precisely that, which are actually working successfully.”

The directory will be sent to all bishops and diocesan evangelization directors in the United States in May.

For further information contact Father John E. Hurley at 202/541-3012 or [JHURLEY@NCCBUSCC.org](mailto:JHURLEY@NCCBUSCC.org)

## Church urges government to resign ‘for failing Kenyans’

(ANO) While addressing reporters in Nyeri Town, Archbishop David Gitari of Kenya said Kenya’s president needed to repent or resign for failing Kenyans. Gitari urged President Moi to be “bold enough” to appoint a vice president, adding, “There is a huge vacuum which is not good for the country.”

Gitari seized the opportunity to speak out at the beginning of a commemorative walk to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the inception of the Church Missionary Society (the pioneer Christian missionaries.)

He expressed disagreement with individuals who clamor to have "one of their own" succeed Moi and criticized Kenya's Trade Minister Joseph Kamotho and other politicians for being behind the crusade.

"I am not in favor of tribes ganging up to campaign for the presidency. Rather, it should be all Kenyans to unite to provide the best candidate for the slot once President Moi goes."

## Bishop Dixon on the Federal Hate Crimes Prevention Act

(ENS) Bishop Jane Holmes Dixon, of the Diocese of Washington, spoke recently at the White House, on the proposed Federal Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

"I am pleased to speak with you today, but saddened almost beyond speaking by the cause that brings me here. However, the depth of my sadness at the atrocities that make the Federal Hate Crimes Prevention Act necessary compels me to speak... for these reasons, I dare not stand silent." she said.

Dixon mentioned her childhood in Mississippi "when a 14-year-old Black child named Emmett Till was shot dead and dumped in the river in 1955 for daring to speak to a white woman in the grocery store." She said although there has been progress in her lifetime, the current horror in Kosovo and the recent murders in Texas, Wyoming and Alabama "reminds us that work is not yet complete."

She concluded by emphasizing that people of faith should not ignore the violence being committed.

"Those of us in the Christian tradition have been further commanded to love one another as God loves us. Each of these requirements of God requires an answer to hate. Hate which I join the President in asking the Congress to help us contain and someday end altogether. Every known and unknown victim of hate cries out for us to do justice..."

## The response to the earthquake in Colombia

The January 25 earthquake that struck Colombia's coffee-growing region left more than 1,200 dead; more than 700 people are reported missing. An emergency grant from the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief was sent shortly after the quake to Action by Churches Together (ACT), which has the means to provide disaster relief at the scene.

In early February, a coordinating committee including Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Lutheran representatives was established to provide relief and rehabilitation help to 3,500 earthquake survivors. To carry this out, ACT has appealed for more than \$800,000 to create a central resource bank and pay for a coordinator and one vehicle.

The resource bank is to oversee projects including technical studies of soil, construction of temporary shelter and architectural designs for new seismic-resistant homes, food aid, economic regeneration and mental health counseling.

## People

Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold has named **Robert G. Tharp**, former bishop of East Tennessee, chairman of the board of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and Development. Tharp began his work as chairman by meeting with the Fund's executive director, Sandra Swan, on the day he was appointed, April 13. Tharp retired as bishop on March 1. He has been a member of the Fund's board for three years.

**The Rev. Jane Butterfield** has been appointed Mission Personnel Officer in the Anglican and Global Relations office. She served as interim in this position since Dorothy Gist's retirement and will assume it full time May 3. Butterfield was an appointed missionary of the Episcopal Church in Zimbabwe and has had a distinguished ministry as a parish priest in the Diocese of Massachusetts.



# news features

99-047

## Archbishop of Canterbury explores unity issues in post-Lambeth climate

by James Solheim

(ENS) Speaking at a theological conference in South Carolina, Archbishop of Canterbury George L. Carey explored the threats to unity of the Anglican Communion in the climate created by last summer's Lambeth Conference of about 750 Anglican/Episcopal bishops from all over the world.

Pointing out that "division continues," Carey said that "there seems to be a growing tendency to retreat every time we face disagreement into smaller and smaller groups, each more certain that they hold the truth, and more determinedly aggressive in their stance against those with whom they disagree."

Taking the Lambeth Conference as a clue to the health of the Anglican Communion, Carey said in his April 8 keynote address at the Scholarly Engagement with Anglican Doctrine (SEAD) that it "showed us that in many different ways the Communion is in excellent heart," growing in many parts of the world despite "facing the most awful conditions." While individual provinces of the Communion have developed different ways "to meet the particular needs of people in different areas," Carey wondered if "we failed to see the inherent dangers of such diversity of growth." The question that confronts the Communion now is "what are the fundamental characteristics of Anglicanism which continue to demand our loyalty, regardless of the particular elements of our church identity which have grown from the local context?"

Carey said that it was clear to him that "we are faced with a number of challenges which threaten our unity as a Communion." He cited the tension between diversity and unity in matters of doctrine and the Anglican theological methodology, especially around the interpretation of Scripture for our time. And he said that the Communion must address "the question of corporate responsibility," maintaining the "bonds of peace whilst the serious issues are considered carefully and prayerfully by us all."

### **Boundaries of diversity**

Anglicans have always wrestled with attempts to "map some boundaries within which legitimate diversity could be held in a time of fierce theological and political debate." As heirs of the Reformation as well as Catholic tradition, "we have prided ourselves on being able to hold together evangelicals, catholics and liberals in one household even at times when the tensions between traditions have been very high." Even though that tension seems "unruly" at times, "It is an admission and recognition that no one of the disparate traditions in the family conveys the whole truth of God. We need each tradition to enrich the whole."

"If the only thing we can say about our Communion is that it is diverse, we are in serious trouble," Carey argued. It is one thing to recognize the validity of everyone's search for truth but that "does not mean that all views or propositions are acceptable, that anything is tolerated, that there are no cardinal doctrines, beliefs and limits to orthodoxy."

Carey also questioned the argument of Dean William Franklin of Berkeley at Yale Divinity School that Lambeth 1998 represented a "shift from former concerns of structure to life and growth," with an emphasis on freer styles of worship and a biblically based moral code as a guide to public and private life.

In stressing the need for "the propagation of reasonable dialogue" following the divisiveness of Lambeth, Carey asked, "How may our Communion see these current difficulties as an opportunity, not for deepening divisions, but for their healing?" He answered his own question by suggesting that "the church needs love to be as generous and as inclusive as the Gospel; the church needs truth to keep in step with Scripture and God's will; the church needs holiness for the sake of its integrity."

Using the ordination of women in some provinces as an example, Carey said that those who accept and those who are opposed must be treated with respect. "I welcome and encourage efforts to maintain full communion between those of different views and urge that we resist the temptation to sideline them," Carey said. He also defended the use of so-called "flying bishops" to provide oversight for parishes in the Church of England who are opposed to women in the priesthood. In opposing attempts to rescind the provision, Carey said that the British bishops "saw the importance of holding the church together and believed that some 'untidiness' of theology was preferable to the bitterness of division."

#### No unilateral action

In comments that seem aimed at the American church, Carey said that the Anglican Communion "is hurt and weakened" when some of its members "act without proper consultation," and that provinces themselves are damaged when "a few dioceses act unilaterally." He said that "it is easy to fragment" and that, once that process begins, it is "immensely difficult" to rebuild unity. "No one has the right to take decisions which affect the whole... No diocese should take unilateral action, which impairs the life of the whole province. No province should take unilateral actions which affect and impair the whole Communion," he said.

"In matters which are demonstrably controversial and divisive, we must deepen the dialogue across the cultures and provinces," he contended. "We must not intimidate one another, misrepresent one another or despise one another." In an obvious reference to an exchange of letters between Bishop Ron Haines of Washington and Bishop Eliphaz Maasri of Uganda, Carey said that linking aid to the vote on the Lambeth resolution against the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals or blessing of homosexual relationships is "immoral and deeply un-Christian and certainly has no place in the Anglican way."

Carey applauded efforts by Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold to build more unity in the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops. "Church history tells us that when bishops disagree, disunity and heresy are usually the fruit."

In his closing comments, Carey said that he had seen the best and the worst of the Communion in his travels but has concluded that "we are still seeking the full richness of being a Communion of churches... we are still on the way to being a Communion and we shall in reality be a Communion—great, growing and strong—when we truly learn to share, when we truly start to build bridges across the cultures and when we truly start to take mission seriously."

--James Solheim is director of the Episcopal Church's Office of News and Information.

99-048

## Jersey City Episcopal Community Development receives \$2 Million grant

by Janice Newman Teetsell

(ENS) The Jersey City Episcopal Community Development Corporation (JCECDC) went to Trenton, New Jersey's state capital, with a welfare-to-work grant proposal asking for \$700,000, and came back with \$2 million from the 21st Century Communities Partnership Initiative. Citing a strong business and social services collaboration, the State chose JCECDC to be one of five agencies to help welfare recipients move from dependence to independence as the State withdraws from the welfare business.

JCECDC has taken the phrase "failure is not an option" and built a program around it that will find employment for up to 400 welfare recipients facing the termination of their benefits. Why the confidence that they will succeed? "We don't get paid if the program does not work," explains Tom Nickerson, executive director of JCECDC. "We are a nonprofit agency being asked to approach the welfare-to-work issues in a businesslike manner."

Welfare recipients will be motivated to participate as their benefits diminish, and the Program Partners will be motivated to see that their participants succeed or they will not receive the full funding. Even the initial efforts will be the responsibility of JCECDC, as it will fund the intake, training, job development, job coaching and job support components.

With a cap of \$5,000 per participant, JCECDC will receive one-half of the funding at the completion of the job-training component, 30 percent when the participant is hired and the remaining 20 percent when the participant has been on the job for 90 days. Although the program is slated to go for two years, reaching 150-200 persons each year, Nickerson admits that if they place the maximum of 400 participants in jobs – and keep them there for 90 days the program could max out in a much shorter period.

### Formula for success

JCECDC borrowed ideas from private industry to develop a formula for success: focus groups to find out what the consumers – the welfare recipients and the business community – want. They looked at who the welfare recipients really are. They found battered spouses, displaced homemakers, and parents with special needs children and with previous work experience outside of the home. Their present circumstances caused the public assistance recipients to develop skills that are transferable to the workplace – juggling appointments, navigating government agencies to locate needed services for their children and themselves, tutoring their children, and stretching limited dollars.

These are people who have been through the job training system before. "They would show us books of certificates received from training programs, but they still didn't have a

job," Nickerson remarks. "We have to counter a history of false hopes. Those receiving public assistance are more willing to get ready for a job if it is real."

Finding real jobs also requires a form of market research. Businesses are wary of another program that sends them job applicants without the minimum requirements for the job. "Businesses want to hire entry-level people who are trainable, someone who is ready and prepared to work and who will move up in the business," said Nickerson. He found that businesses are also concerned about the lack of a support system for the new workers and their families. "They did not want the new hires to be on the job two days and then have to go home to their children."

The program is also interested in finding jobs that pay more than a minimum wage, which offers no motivation for welfare recipients. "The diocese has a living wage recommendation of \$7.50/hr," explains Nickerson, "and we are looking to place participants in a career path."

### **Trying new techniques**

The new program was developed in partnership with the YWCA of Hudson County and in collaboration with Christ Hospital, Summit Bank, Fleet Bank, Hudson County Social Services Agency, and Youth Consultation Services. What differentiates the program from others is its willingness to try new techniques. "We are prepared to pilot new methods of engaging and successfully employing 'hard to serve' welfare recipients, especially the populations with multiple barriers to employment, those who are in families with intergenerational welfare dependency, and those who have been on public assistance for more than two years," Nickerson explains. Instead of re-inventing the wheel, the program is designed to "build on neighborhood social support systems and existing training programs and services and use collaborative agreements to make them function more effectively."

The YWCA will provide the training. Each individual will be treated as a consumer, approached with a belief that they have "sufficient assets and strengths" needed for change and improvement. What the participant wants to do will be an equally important factor in their training. Job coaches will be assigned from day one to assist participants in mapping out a placement plan. The operative theme for participants will be "this is where I want to be – what do I need to get there?"

Coaches will also help participants link with the support services needed to keep them working—childcare and transportation services, many of which are provided through state and county agencies. Coaches will be there for the participants when problems arise, even after the participant finds employment. The general theory is that if participants remain employed for at least 90 days, their chance of continuing employment increases.

While the job coaches are preparing the participants, the job developers will look for real jobs for each participant, matching job interests with the individuals.

"Over time our pitches will get better, our support will get better, and if they don't get better, we won't get paid," explains Nickerson.

### **An umbrella of outreach**

The welfare-to-work program is yet another rib in this non-profit umbrella for the Episcopal parishes in Jersey City. JCECDC is a creation of the Jersey City congregations and the Diocese of Newark. Formed in 1997, it is the successor to Jersey City Episcopal Housing, Inc., a not-for-profit developer of low income housing since 1986. JCECDC still sponsors 160 units of low-income housing, serving more than 500 residents in the downtown, Bergen, and Greenville sections of Jersey City.

The board of directors includes representatives from the community, the local Episcopal congregations, the Diocese of Newark, Christ Hospital, and community leaders. Its existence allows the rectors and missionaries of the Jersey City Episcopal churches to concentrate on meeting the needs of their congregations, while the CDC oversees their community outreach programs. By July 1999 JCECDC, established with a two-year seed grant, will face the challenge of being independent itself. "We are building an organization capable of sustaining itself as well as continuing to do the kind of work it was setting up to do."

Grace Kids, an after-school program started in 1997 by members of Grace Van Vorst Episcopal Church, is now administered by JCECDC, in partnership with Grace Van Vorst and the Jersey City Department of Recreation. JCECDC also administers a program with the Department of Recreation for the children at Church of the Incarnation -- Incarnation Kids -- and in Greenville for the residents of the Mid City I & II Housing Developments. The Mid City program is funded through a federal Drug Elimination Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "The CDC allows us to partner with local congregations to assist them in offering community based programs that open the churches seven days a week. This assistance includes the use of public funding as appropriate," explains Nickerson.

In September 1998 the boards of JCECDC and Corpus Christi Ministries Inc. (CCMI) agreed to a merger that will ensure the continued viability of the CCMI program. Founded in 1989 by the late Rev. Bernard Healy, CCMI has provided housing and services for HIV/AIDS residents. As treatments improve, and persons with AIDS live longer, the scope of the housing and services has changed. The focus has changed from dealing with the inevitable death of residents to the prospect for employment and, in some cases, relocation to independent housing on their own. In October yet another phase of the ministry of Corpus Christi was unveiled with the opening of the first residence for families living with HIV/AIDS. According to Nickerson, JCECDC and CCMI have just received another grant to open a fourth site for Corpus Christi.

Nickerson is eager to talk about the prospects of the welfare-to-work program, as well as the other projects administered by JCECDC. However he maintains the stance that this is one of a group of community organizations operating within the diocese that deserve attention and, more importantly, can share their knowledge and experience with other communities.

--Janice Newman Teetsell is a member of *The VOICE* board and of St. Andrew and Holy Communion, South Orange.

99-049

## Florida Alpha Conference highlights 'evangelism for ordinary people'

by A. E. P. Wall

(ENS) Karin Skau took a sip of iced tea and said she had traveled from Puerto Rico to Central Florida to pick up something for prisoners back home.

Bonnie Brownlee put down her sandwich and said she drove up from Melbourne. She was excited about the things she would take home. For Kay Elwood, 89 years old, it was a dazzling opportunity to share something invigorating with friends in her retirement home in Longwood and it was a reaffirmation of her own faith.

All around them at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Winter Springs hundreds of Alpha enthusiasts were enjoying lunch on the first day of a two-day Florida Alpha Conference.

It was a time of spiritual challenge for more than 600 persons who were there to learn about Alpha, a fast-growing program that reaches out to people who are new to Christianity and to those who dropped out along the way.

Alpha began in an Anglican church, Holy Trinity Brompton in London, and it grew and grew and grew. Stimulated by the Rev. Nicky Gumbel of Holy Trinity, backed up by thousands of volunteers, Alpha courses were offered 10,500 times worldwide last year. Courses are being organized by many churches in Central Florida, now that leaders have been trained at the Florida Alpha Conference.

Skau, a native of Norway, is a prison chaplain in Puerto Rico. She learned about the Florida Alpha Conference on the Internet, and will offer Alpha to prisoners looking for a new approach to life. Alpha courses have already been given in 102 British prisons.

Brownlee chairs the evangelism committee at the Presbyterian Church of the Good Shepherd in Melbourne where, she thinks, Alpha will make a lot of sense.

Frank St. John, an engineer who is one of 70 ministry elders at Calvary Assembly in Winter Park, says Alpha will help reach the unchurched, enriching lives with enthusiasm in prayer and Scripture study.

Maria Roach smiled cheerfully during a coffee break as Nicky Gumbel, the conference keynoter, saluted her group of 15 who came over from the Bahamas to take Alpha back to 10 churches there,

### **Evangelism for ordinary people**

About half of the 600 who attended the March 18-19 Conference were Episcopalians, learning how to offer Alpha courses in parishes or prisons or wherever. Bishop John W. Howe of the Diocese of Central Florida welcomed the participants to what he happily described as the largest Alpha Conference ever held in the United States. He said Alpha exists to help Christians "pass it on."

Later Howe admitted that he knew the conference would be a success but it "far exceeded my expectations." The visiting teams from Alpha in the United Kingdom and the United States "were thrilled and excited, declaring it the largest in the U.S.A. and the most successful," he added. Tables set up for the event sold \$27,000 in books and tapes before running out of merchandise. Tapes made during the Florida Alpha Conference are available.

Gumbel, who is author of several popular books about Alpha, said that Alpha is evangelism for ordinary people because it gives everyone a chance to learn about the Christian faith during a structured but informal course that's entirely contemporary in its approach. He pointed out that newcomers to a local Alpha course look around and see their own kind of people. They eat familiar food together, they listen to familiar music and join in the singing. They are comfortable with today's approach to the mind through the emotions.

Gumbel and his wife, Pippa, flew to Florida from Colorado Springs, where an Alpha Conference had just concluded.

### **Prayer was central**

Prayer was central to the conference, supported by a team of about 30 volunteers. When Gumbel invited anyone to step forward for prayer with members of the team and with each other, one who stood up and joined the group was the Rev. W. Donald Lyon, rector of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in DeLand.

William Buechner, a volunteer who is a member of New Covenant, saw Lyon on the other side of the church but simply knew that he needed a very special prayer. He pushed

through hundreds of people until he was at Lyon's side. Lyon felt Buechner's hand on his heart and heard a prayer for healing. There was no way for Buechner to know that Lyon had an appointment for cardiac catheterization, a diagnostic test, the next day. Nor did he know that during the catheterization the doctor would declare Lyon's arteries to be astonishingly clear, the arteries, as he put it, of a 20-year-old.

The Rev. Carl Merola, deacon at the Episcopal Church of the New Covenant in Winter Park, was the administrator for the Florida Alpha Conference, which attracted participants active in Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Vineyard, Anglican, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Moravian, Lutheran and other churches.

--Ed Wall is the former editor of the *Central Florida Episcopalian*, the diocesan newspaper for Central Florida.

Here are ways to get information about Alpha:

Phone Alpha North America at 212/378-0292 or check out these web sites:

[www.alphana.org](http://www.alphana.org)

[www.alpha.org.uk/](http://www.alpha.org.uk/)

[www.cfdioocese.org](http://www.cfdioocese.org)

Or phone The Episcopal Church of the New Covenant at 407/699-0202.

99-050

## A doctor opens his doors to the victims of Sierra Leone's rebels

by Kathryn McCormick

(ENS) Despite the searing television images of exhausted refugees and the rubble created by NATO missiles, Kosovo remains far from the only trouble spot in the world today. Dr. Kojo Carew knows that only too well. At two small, overworked clinics in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, he and his wife, Dr. Lynette Palmer, treat victims of the vicious warfare that has plagued their country for more than eight years.

"I decided in 1997 that those who have received the brunt of the rebel war should benefit from the best that the country has in private care," said Carew, who opened the doors of the 20-bed clinics he heads to take in hundreds of patients who had been wounded or maimed by marauding rebels.

The most recent wave of violence by the army of rebels seeking to overthrow the country's government began in northern Sierra Leone in late December. On January 6, rebels attacked Freetown. Fighting forced many out of their homes, he said, recalling that his clinics, Netland Hospital and Curney Barnes Memorial Hospital, were packed.

"At the peak, we had 111 patients in beds all around," he said. "We used the garage space, utility rooms, the corridors. Wherever there was space, there were patients. And we had the relatives of patients who stayed, too. They were terrified to go back to their homes."

"And apart from the bed patients, we had 70 to 80 others who had less serious wounds but who had nowhere else to go, so they stayed on the hospital campus for protection and for feeding because we provided meals to patients."

At one point about 300 people filled the buildings and grounds, he said. People arrived in a steady stream, many bearing wounded relatives on pushcarts or on their backs. "Often people came late to the hospital," Carew said, meaning that many were trapped in their homes, unable to get to the hospital until days after they had been wounded. By that time, he said, they had become weak through loss of blood and were susceptible to infections. Rebels struck in many neighborhoods, inflicting the machete wounds—cutting off hands, arms, ears, tongues, and feet—a technique for which they are infamous.

For a few days at the beginning of the recent attacks, Carew said, he and his wife worked on their own, bearing the brunt of the costs. "The International Red Cross came to my rescue, and they have been at my side since the present onslaught began on January 6."

### **Deep commitment**

The couple's commitment to caring for their patients runs deep. During a recent interview, Carew studied a photograph of a young woman lying in one of his hospital's beds and remembered her story—just one of the thousands of stories of people he has heard and helped.

"This is a 23-year-old mother," he said. "She has a three-month-old baby. The rebel soldiers put their house on fire, and they took the baby from her in order to throw it into the fire. She resisted, and they shot her. We managed to save her leg, but she was so sick when she arrived at the hospital that she couldn't nurse her child. So I went to my house and got some of the milk that my wife and I had for our six-month-old son, Jermaine Nnamdi, and gave it to the woman's child."

"They're still in the hospital, but they're doing fine now," he added, pointing with a smile to the picture of mother and baby, who was peacefully nursing again.

Another patient's story brought Carew to the United States for a recent short visit. Sylvester Kaikai, a 24-year-old, had been shot in the head by rebels. Although his condition had been stabilized at the hospital in Freetown, it was clear that a neurosurgeon would be needed to remove the bone fragments embedded in the man's brain and to deal with the bullet itself, which was resting on the floor of his skull. A way was found to airlift the man to a Little Rock, Arkansas, hospital, where a neurosurgeon performed the work without a fee. Carew accompanied his patient and watched the operation.

The man's prognosis is good, said Carew, noting that while the bone fragments had been cleaned out, the bullet was left in place. "It is near a very delicate area," he said, "but it is at the bottom of the skull, so it won't move. It's best to leave it there."

Carew took time during the man's post-operative recovery to fly to New York City for a brief visit with, among others, Richard Parkins, director of Episcopal Migration Ministries, who toured Freetown and a number of refugee camps in Sierra Leone last year.

### **Beyond evil**

The conflict in Sierra Leone is unusual, Parkins said recently, because "it's not ethnic, it's not tribal, it's not even political. It's about greed." At the center of it all are the country's rich supply of diamonds as well as Sierra Leone's growing importance as an international transfer point for illegal drugs. And, Parkins added, the exploitation of the country's large pool of very poor people, who are being recruited to fight.

This includes children, Carew said, explaining that often the rebels kidnap youngsters, feed them cocaine, arm them with machetes and send them out to hurt as many people as they can.

"This is beyond evil," Parkins said. "There's almost no way to explain it."

Further, it poses problems for future attempts at reconciliation. "What do you do with a nine-year-old who has seriously wounded people in his own village?" Parkins said. "Even their own mothers won't take them back, and there are thousands of these kids."

Carew nevertheless retains some optimism, in part because of his faith. He is an Anglican, a member of St. George's Cathedral in Freetown. "My father is still a member of the choir there," he smiles.

While the atmosphere remains tense in Freetown, the violence has abated slightly in recent weeks so Carew's hospital campus now houses only 76 patients. Some patients have been moved to the country's national stadium in Freetown, a sports facility that is now home to 40,000 displaced persons, most of whom live there without shelter.

Asked if he would flee the country with his wife and son, Carew replied that he will stay, "Sierra Leone is my country, and it's a beautiful country," he said. "I cannot see ever leaving it."

*Donations to support efforts to aid displaced persons may be mailed to the Society for the Advancement of Culture and Welfare in Sierra Leone, P.O. Box 752, Dayton, OH 45401. The society was set up by Williamson Ademu-John, who accompanied Parkins to Sierra Leone.*

--Kathryn McCormick is associate director of the Office of News and Information of the Episcopal Church.

99-051

## California conference explores new forms of collaborative ministry

by Dick Snyder

(ENS) Whether it's known as total ministry, mutual ministry or collaborative ministry--it is associated with excitement and growth within the Anglican Communion.

That was the consensus of individuals who participated in the International Symposium on Local Collaborative Ministry held February 24-March 1 at Burlingame, California.

"This excitement of local ministry development is growing and has spread to so many parts of the Anglican Communion," said the Rev. Jim Kelsey, bishop-elect of Northern Michigan.

Approximately 80 people--bishops, priests, deacons and lay people from seven nations--met to plot and plan, worship and dream of a church with collaborative ministry, a church where congregations discover their own strength and identify leadership from within.

Participants "are really dealing with an authentic form of church life," said the Rt. Rev. Roger Herft, bishop of Newcastle, New Zealand. "It enables people to struggle, and brings us back to basics and asks us, 'Is everything being done in each parish to enable people to get a sense of what their baptism means to them, and how that baptism is expressed in worship in their lives.'"

Dioceses in several countries have developed programs to provide for theological education, and for training and ordination of local clergy. There is interest particularly in rural areas which are unable to support seminary-trained clergy. But several bishops noted successful programs in urban churches as well.

It means a collaborative approach for the professional clergy who work in ministry development with these congregations.

"That causes some anxieties," noted the Rt. Rev. Brian Farran, bishop of Perth, Australia.

But it also creates a passion, noted the Rt. Rev. Thomas Brown, bishop of Wellington, New Zealand.

"One can understand their passion, because in many ways the kind of ministry they (symposium participants) practice seems to have an authenticity which can get lost in a traditional type of parish where a vicar is flat out running an organization."

The Rev. Steve Kelsey of Connecticut said that while participants "share common principles, the strategies are different depending on the context" of the congregation and the country.

"It really blows out of the water any idea that you've got one model that everyone else should be doing," he continued. "But it also gives a sense of hope: it's almost like convergent evolution. There is spontaneous activity in all these different places."

Before they left Burlingame, participants agreed to participate in an e-mail network to share information and developments from their countries. Several said they would work toward having regional meetings similar to the symposium.

Participants consisted of representatives from Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Scotland, Uganda and the United States.

--Dick Snyder is a freelance writer who lives in Nevada.

99-052

## Episcopal Church responds to the Kosovo crisis

In a statement issued March 26, Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold of the Episcopal Church deplored the "terrible spectacle of violence and civil strife being visited upon the people in the state of Kosovo and wider Yugoslavia" and expressed the hope that the United Nations Security Council would exercise its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security by playing a leadership role in resolving the tragedy unfolding in Kosovo and neighboring countries. As the violence continues and the number of refugees increases to nearly 800,000, the Presiding Bishop has reiterated his plea to all parties to pursue the path of negotiation and for the church and all people of good will to pray fervently for peace.

In responding to the humanitarian crisis of thousands of refugees pouring into Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief—the humanitarian assistance arm of the Episcopal Church—notified parishes around the country that the Fund was receiving contributions in response to the crisis. The Fund channeled emergency assistance through ACT (Action by Churches Together), providing an important early response to the Kosovo crisis. This Sunday parishioners will receive inserts in their service bulletins urging them to contribute generously to the Fund to support further

assistance to the refugees, including support for their longer-term rehabilitation and resettlement. To multiply the impact of its assistance, the Presiding Bishop's Fund works ecumenically with Church World Service and ACT in responding to humanitarian crises around the world.

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the refugee resettlement and refugee advocacy program of the Episcopal Church, has with other national resettlement agencies urged the US Government to increase humanitarian assistance to support those countries that have suddenly found themselves hosting thousands of uprooted ethnic Albanians. The well-being of the refugees and the preservation of avenues of escape for those who may yet flee Kosovo require that host countries be sustained in their effort to provide hospitality to those still in flight. A corresponding concern will be the fate of the thousands of internally displaced Kosovars—a number that will increase if access to neighboring countries is blocked.

EMM and its national partner agencies have actively opposed the US Naval base at Guantanamo Bay as a relocation center for the 20,000 ethnic Albanian deportees whom the US Government has offered to assist. While applauding the Clinton Administration's initiative in relieving the refugee burden of those nations receiving the brunt of the refugee crisis, EMM with its partner agencies has written to the Administration indicating a preference for a relocation option that recognizes the need for the vast number of separated families to be reunited as soon as possible. Additional reasons for rejecting Guantanamo as their temporary home include the overwhelming desire of uprooted Kosovars to return home and the inappropriateness of placing traumatized refugees in a setting as inhospitable and isolated as Guantanamo. We prefer to maintain the refugees in the Balkan region with generous US aid to the impacted nations or arrange for displaced Albanians to be resettled in the US until their voluntary repatriation could be accomplished.

Many people have called about sponsoring Albanian refugees. EMM is registering interested parties and, more particularly, those relatives willing to sponsor family members affected by the violence. However, EMM has made it clear that there is no immediate prospect of resettling Albanian refugees in the United States as the US Government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are focusing all efforts on relieving the present humanitarian crisis facing the refugees and their eventual return to Kosovo. Depending on future developments, resettlement could be an option for some Kosovars.

The Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C., monitors Congress and the Administration in this constantly changing crisis and collaborates with ecumenical partners in attempting to influence an early and peaceful solution to the current Balkan crisis. The office will seek opportunities to join the voice of the Episcopal Church with other denominations in strategizing about how the churches can be instruments of peace and reconciliation in this tragedy.

*To contribute to the Episcopal Church's collection for refugee aid, make each check payable to the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, note on the check that it is for Kosovo Refugees and mail it to:*

PBWFR  
C/o Bankers Trust  
P.O. Box 12043  
Newark, NJ 07101

**Persons making credit card donations may call (800) 334-7626, ext. 5129.**  
The executive director of the Fund is Sandra Swan, (800) 334-7626, ext. 6020.

Persons inquiring about refugee sponsorship may call Richard Parkins, director of Episcopal Migration Ministries, at (800) 334-7626, ext. 6252. The Office of Government Relations can be reached at (800) 228-0515.

99-053

## Presiding Bishop's remarks on NATO's bombing campaign

During a season marked by self examination, repentance and reconciliation to God and one another, we find ourselves witnessing the terrible spectacle of violence and civil strife being visited upon the people in the state of Kosovo and wider Yugoslavia. I invite those in positions of public trust to seek guidance from the One from whom all wisdom flows.

The acts of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo are deeply repugnant and stir up memories of ethnic hatreds that have marred the course of history. The civil strife that has ensued has uprooted and displaced families; the conflict has especially endangered the safety of children, the elderly, and the most vulnerable in society. According to estimates by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, since the beginning of the conflict in Kosovo a year ago, some 450,000 people have been displaced by fighting -- more than 260,000 of them in Kosovo alone.

The response by NATO to use overwhelming military power to halt these heinous acts will be widely debated. We need to hear the concern of the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the Security Council should have an active role in any decisions related to the use of force and in the peaceful settlement of this dispute. The UN charter recognizes the Security Council as having the primary responsibility in international peace and security. I also applaud the Secretary General's repeated pleas to the Yugoslav Government to pursue peaceful means of resolving some of the long-standing tensions within the country.

I am personally torn by this decision of NATO because its purpose is noble while the means are so violent. Christ calls us into relationship and the present course leads us to further alienation from one another. Yet for us to stand by and allow the genocide to continue is also intolerable. Regardless of what our conscience may tell us about the decision to undertake this massive bombing campaign, the failure to resolve this problem through discourse points to a profound failure of the human spirit and will. It also reveals the insidious way in which religious perspectives, grounded in God's all embracing compassion and love for humankind, can be subverted and made to serve the idol of ethnic or national self-justification. I urgently appeal to President Milosevic to re-consider his options and pursue the path of peace through negotiation. And I invite the whole church to join me in prayer for the safety of the people of Yugoslavia, especially in Kosovo, and for the safety of the men and women of all the Armed Forces who have been placed in harm's way.

Frank T. Griswold  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
March 26, 1999  
Friday in Lent V



# reviews and resources

99-054

## Seventh annual PrideFest America

(ENS) More than 40,000 people are expected to attend the seventh annual PrideFest America, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania April 26 - May 2.

PrideFest is the largest summit of gay rights organizations and advocates, including 17 national and 47 regional participating groups.

Integrity/Philadelphia, a branch of the national organization of lesbian and gay Episcopalians, will also participate. According to Peter J. Ryker, convener for the branch, they will share a booth with Center City Episcopal Gay and Lesbian Outreach on the final day of the gathering as part of the symposium and festival "in the heart of the gay community."

Among the events on this year's agenda are a VIP kickoff party, Jim Wheeler National Gay Youth Symposium, a national history project, national authors panel, the first annual international arts award, gays and the holocaust panel and national film.

PrideFest will feature an important public policy agenda addressing issues facing America's gay community and the nation.

For further information on PrideFest America contact Lisa Driver at (703) 518-5170.

## Archbishop Desmond Tutu speaks with Bill Moyers

(ENS) Public Affairs Television, Inc., has announced the April 27 presentation on PBS of "Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Bill Moyers."

Tutu has been a leading figure in South Africa's struggle to end apartheid and heal its ravaging wounds, winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his efforts. Most recently he helped his fellow citizens confront the brutal legacy of apartheid as chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which investigated human rights violations in South Africa from 1960 to 1994.

In the film, Tutu tells Moyers of his experiences with the TRC, as he and his commissioners spent three years traveling throughout the country, listening to soul-searing stories of torture, kidnapping, murder and rape in an effort to compile a complete picture of the atrocities of apartheid.

"We needed to look the beast in the eye. But in a way that the past wouldn't hold us hostage any longer," he said. "We had to hear the stories, but we didn't want the vengeance of the Nuremberg trials. Nobody could ignore the Commission. Some have vilified it, others have praised it. No one has treated it with indifference."

This wide-ranging interview, which will air at 10 p.m. (EST), was taped in Atlanta, Georgia where Tutu is currently in residence at Emory University teaching theology and writing a book. He continues to be a fierce critic of human rights violations, speaking out against the genocidal attacks in Rwanda and leading a campaign to ban the manufacture of land mines.

A video cassette of the special is available for home viewing for \$29.95 and for educators for \$89.95 through the Films for the Humanities and Sciences at (800) 257-5126. A written transcript is available for \$6 from Burrelle's at (800) 777-8398.

## Photographs included in this issue of ENS:

1. Archbishop of Canterbury receives honorary degree at Sewanee (99-039)
2. Archbishop of Canterbury receives honorary degree at Sewanee (99-039)
3. Alpha Conference in Florida draws hundreds interested in evangelism (99-049)
4. A doctor opens his doors to the victims of Sierra Leone's rebels (99-050)
5. A doctor opens his doors to the victims of Sierra Leone's rebels (99-050)

(All photos are also available in color)

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